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ABSTRACT

In recent years a number of school districts in South Carolina have reported difficulty in filling library/media specialist positions. There is concern that college and university programs may not be meeting current and potential needs for media specialists, as well as concern for the quality of library/media education. Undertaken in order to determine whether the library/media certification area should be considered an area of critical need, this study examined BEDS (Basic Education Data System) data on media specialists; certification requirements; library/media education in South Carolina schools; job vacancies; and state department of education activities. It was concluded that, although some shortage of media specialists does exist, it is not critical at this time. The most vital need is to improve the holding power for media specialists through improved working conditions and standards. Worksheets listing state requirements for certification as media specialist, media communication specialist, and media supervisor are attached. (MES)

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THE STATUS OF TRAINING AND SUPPLY OF MEDIA SPECIALISTS IN SOUTH CAROLINA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Prepared by the Media Specialist Study Committee

of the

State Department of Education

December, 1985

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years a number of school districts have reported experiencing difficulty in filling librarian/media specialist positions. There is concern that the college and university programs in this area may not be meeting the current and potential needs for media specialists. There is some concern also for the quality of library/media education.

These concerns have been expressed to the State Superintendent of Education and the Teacher Education and Recruitment Committee of the State Board of Education. In August, 1985, a committee was appointed by the Superintendent to study the current and potential shortage of media specialists in the state and to report the findings. The objective of this study was to use the findings in determining whether or not the library/media certification area should be considered as an area of critical need as defined in the Education Improvement Act of 1984.

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I. CURRENT STATUS--LIBRARY/MEDIA SPECIALISTS EMPLOYED IN SOUTH CAROLINA

A. BEDS DATA

Based on 1983-84 statistical data, there were 1076 media specialists serving in 1055 public elementary and secondary schools in South Carolina (730 in 789 elementary schools and 346 in 266 secondary schools). Thirty-eight elementary media specialists and five secondary media specialists served in more than one school. Uncertified media specialists numbered thirty-one in elementary and fifteen in secondary. A total of 656 or 61 percent held Master's degrees or above.

The Defined Minimum Program requires that each school (K-6) with an enrollment of 375 provide the services of a full-time librarian (schools with less than 375, half-time services.) Schools (7-12) "with a membership of 400 or more students shall employ a certified librarian devoting full-time to library services." Schools with less than 400 have half-time personnel.

B. CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

There are currently three types of certification in the area of library science: the media specialist degree, the media communication specialist degree, and the media supervisor degree. The media specialist degree and the media communication specialist degree require thirty hours in library science for certification; the media supervisor degree requires a Master's degree and certification as an elementary or secondary supervisor. (See Appendixes A, B and C.)

1. MINIMUM SCORE

Presentation of a minimum score of 640 in the area of media specialist on the National Teacher Examination (NTE) is required for certification at both the elementary and secondary levels. South Carolina has a reciprocal agreement with thirty other states having NASDTEC (National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification) accreditation to accept their certification if the person has worked as a certified media specialist in that state during three of the past seven years.

2. CERTIFICATION STATISTICS

a. Individuals holding current valid certificates:

Media Specialist	- 1,892
Teacher Librarian	- 162
Media Communication Specialist	- 14
Media Supervisor	- 14

b. Out-of-field permits for 1985-86 school year:

Media Specialist	- 17

c. Individuals certified since July 1, 1985:

Media Specialist	- 37
Media Communication Specialist	- 2

C. LIBRARY/MEDIA EDUCATION

At the present time, only two institutions in the state are offering programs in library education. The College of Library and Information Science at the University of South Carolina offers a Master's degree program in librarianship, and a joint Master's in both English and history. The College offers a six-year specialist degree in library science.

The College of Library and Information Science at the University of South Carolina is the only American Library Association (ALA) accredited program in South Carolina. The program for preparation as a school library media specialist is accredited also by the National Association of State Departments of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC). The College makes use of the latest technology available through the Office of Telecommunications Instruction to provide both closed-circuit and open-circuit broadcasts of course work for those in the Master's degree program as well as for those seeking certificate renewal. Likewise course work is available on several sites within the State with College faculty conducting classes in more traditional environments. The College provides consultative services to the public schools in South Carolina and develops workshops, seminars, and other continuing education activities as requested.

Currently there are 145 persons enrolled in this program, eighty of whom are school media specialists. Since the opening of the College in 1972, approximately 40 percent of the graduates have become school media specialists.

The undergraduate library science program at South Carolina State College is being phased out. However there are three juniors, four seniors, and one part-time student currently enrolled here.

D. JOB VACANCIES

The Teacher Placement Office of the South Carolina Employment Security Commission reported on November 5, 1985, that there were five applications on file for school media specialists.

In a telephone survey of all district personnel directors in September, 1985, fourteen districts indicated that they still had a vacancy in the library media area (a total of seventeen vacancies in all). Districts also indicated that they had experienced some difficulty in filling these positions, though not as much as in the previous year. Only about a third of the districts anticipate a need for additional media specialists during the next five years.

The average age for elementary and secondary media specialists for the school year 1984-85 was 43.7 years as compared with the average age of 37 years for teachers, librarians and guidance counselors. The largest number of elementary media specialists were in the 36-40 age bracket, while secondary media specialists were in the 41-45 age bracket, with 15 percent over the age of 50. In 1984-85 the average number of years in education was sixteen years.

Table I

3-YEAR OBSERVATION PERIOD

TEACHERS BY TYPE-COMPARISON BETWEEN SCHOOL YEARS 1980-81 AND 1983-84

WITH TRANSFERS REFLECTING NET TRANSFERS OF CONTINUING TEACHERS DURING THE PERIOD AND (1981 RECLASS) EQUALING 1981 FTE PLUS TRANSFERS

Course	1981 FTE	Left	Continuing	Transfers	1981 Reclass	Old Hires	New Hires	1984 FTE
ibrarian Elementary)	752.7	150.0	625.6	22.9	775.6	89.5	29.6	744.7
.ibrarian Secondary)	369.7	71.0	301.2	2.5	372.2	36.3	9.0	346.5

The computed attrition rate for librarians within the state was approximately 9.1 percent, slightly higher than the 8.9 percent derived for classroom teachers. This rate was determined by comparing the staff employed in 1983-84 with those who continued their employment in 1984-85.

Table II

TEACHER NEED BY TYPE*

PROJECTED 1988-89 TEACHER FULL-TIME EQUIVALENCY

Part I -- Based on Current Trends

Course	1984 FTE	1989 File	Continuing	Old Hires	New Hires
Librarian (Elementary)	744.7	754.5	362.7	115.2	137.3
Librarian (Secondary)	346.5	345.9	233.6	49.4	62.9

* Published by Management Information Section, Office of Research, August, 1984.

E. CURRENT ACTIVITIES OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STAFF

Although the Library/Media consultants have no direct responsibility for supplying the demand for school media specialists, they do have a responsibility to provide consultative service through conducting in-service programs and conferences for library/media specialists.

For the past four years, a summer recertification course for media specialists has been conducted by the State Department of Education staff. Thirty-eight media specialists have completed the course.

Colleges and universities also offer summer courses in the area of media and related subjects.

II. CONCLUSIONS BASED ON AVAILABLE DATA:

While it was agreed upon that some shortage of media specialists does exist, the committee does not feel that it is critical at this time. They were unable also to determine vacancies based on the expected retirement of present media specialists. The committee, therefore, was unable to determine, from current data, whether or not there would be a future shortage of media specialists.

The majority of districts seem to have resolved the problem for the 1985-86 school year. Under present state policies it is possible for districts to staff positions with uncertified personnel who are working towards full certification.

The Office of Teacher Education and Certification has a supply of certified media specialists on file. This seems to indicate that school media specialists are leaving the field of education, or their area of specialized training within the teaching profession. The Employment Security Commission has current applications on file for jobs as library/media specialists.

Information was not available on the number of media specialists taking and passing the NTE.

The program at the College of Librarianship, of the University of South Carolina, is expanding with courses now being offered on the branch campuses and over television, and expects to be able to meet the demand for training.

The most vital need seems to be in improving the holding power of the media specialists through improved working conditions and standards.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS:

The following recommendations are offered to improve the training and supply of certified media specialists in South Carolina:

1. The College of Librarianship, at the University of South Carolina, should be encouraged to offer additional courses in the branches and over television.
2. The State Department of Education should continue to publicize available programs in librarianship and encourage high school students to pursue librarianship as a career.
3. The role of the school media specialist should be more clearly defined in the Defined Minimum Program and the media specialists evaluated by an instrument designed for this purpose.

4. Extended contracts (beyond the minimum of 190 school day contracts) are recommended for all media specialists.
5. The number of clerical assistants in the media centers should be increased to ensure that all schools have clerical assistance, regardless of enrollment.
6. The committee did not recommend that undergraduate programs are needed in the colleges as the cause of school librarianship is better served by personnel with 4-year liberal arts degrees and a 5th year of specilization in library science.
7. The committee did not recommend that a review of the certification requirements is indicated at this time.
8. A committee should be convened annually to review, and report on, the shortage of media specialists, future projections, courses being offered and college enrollment in this field.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION AS MEDIA SPECIALIST

NAME _____ CERT NO. _____ DATE _____

			ON FILE	LACKS
A.	Bachelor's Degree		_____	_____
B.	National Teacher Examinations - A minimum score of 640 on the Media Specialist, Library and Audio-Visual Services Teaching Area Examination.		_____	_____
C.	General Preparation - 42-45 Semester Hours	Semester Hours		
	English	12	_____	_____
	Biological and Physical Sciences	12	_____	_____
	Social Studies	12	_____	_____
	Personal and Community Health	2-3	_____	_____
	Art and Music (appreciation or history)	4-6	_____	_____
D.	Professional Preparation - 18 Semester Hours			
	Child Growth and Development	3	_____	_____
	Adolescent Growth and Development	3	_____	_____
	Principles and Practices of Teaching including Curriculum Design	6	_____	_____
	Practicum in Media Center	6	_____	_____
E.	Specialized Preparation - 30 Semester Hours			
	Administration and Management of School Media Programs	3	_____	_____
	Selection and Utilization of Media, Print and Non-Print	6	_____	_____
	Acquisition and Organization of Print and Non-Print Media	3	_____	_____
	Information Sources and Services (including reference)	3	_____	_____
	Graphic and Photographic Media (Audio and Video)	3	_____	_____
	Electronic Media	3	_____	_____
	Preventive and Routine Maintenance	3	_____	_____
	Electives (to be selected from two of the above areas)	6	_____	_____
		Total Shortage		_____

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR SUGGESTED CONTENT TO BE INCLUDED IN EACH AREA

Professional Preparation - The Practicum in Media Center will include experience both in the media center and in the classroom.

Specialized Preparation

Administration and Management of School Media Programs - Function and organization of the school media center and program. Emphasis on philosophy, principles and purposes of media program management, research and evaluation of media programs.

Selection and Utilization of Media, Print, and Non-Print - Development and application of criteria for media selection; utilization of selection tools and bibliographies; evaluation of resource collections; guidance and interpretation to staff, relating media services to instructional program; evaluation of instruction packages and materials.

Acquisition and Organization of Print and Non-Print Media - Sources of materials for school media centers; processes of acquisition and collection building; systems of indexing and organizing collections; classification systems and processes of subject analysis; cataloging.

Information Sources and Services - Information needs in society; interpersonal information exchange; information materials; specialized information services and support agencies, bibliographic control and services; reference materials; interpretation to users.

Graphic and Photographic Media - Design, production, storage and integration of graphic and photographic media (charts, graphs, transparencies, slides, prints, etc.) into the instructional program.

Electronic Media - Design, production, storage and integration of electronic media (video tape, audio tape, recorders, discs, computers, etc.) into the instructional program.

Preventive and Routine Maintenance of Media Equipment - Emphasis of simple repair, problem identification and servicing media equipment.

Electives - Additional work in one of the areas described, with free choice strengthening special needs or interests of the media specialist. School media specialists will find courses in children's literature and young people's literature essential.

NOTE: This worksheet is to be considered advisory only. Requirements are subject to change at the discretion of the State Board of Education.

Promulgated in final form by the State Board of Education on January 16, 1978.

NOTE: **Upon completion of all requirements, a written request must be submitted to receive certification in this area.**

REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION AS MEDIA COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST

NAME _____ CERT NO. _____ DATE _____

			ON FILE	LACKS
A.	Bachelor's Degree			
B.	National Teacher Examinations - A minimum score of 640 on the Media Specialist, Library and Audio-Visual Services Teaching Area Examination.			
C.	General Preparation - 42-45 Semester Hours	Semester Hours		
	English	12		
	Biological and Physical Sciences	12		
	Social Studies	12		
	Personal and Community Health	2-3		
	Art and Music (appreciation or history)	4-6		
D.	Professional Preparation - 18 Semester Hours			
	Child Growth and Development	3		
	Adolescent Growth and Development	3		
	Principles and Practices of Teaching including Curriculum Design	6		
	Practicum in Media Center	6		
E.	Specialized Preparation - 30 Semester Hours			
	Special Methods of Media Instruction and Instructional Design	3		
	Audio Recording	3		
	Photographic Reproduction	3		
	Cinematography	3		
	Graphics	3		
	Television	3		
	Administration and Management of School Media Programs	3		
	Preventive and Routine Maintenance of Media Equipment	3		
	Electives to be chosen from one of the above areas	6		
		Total Shortage		

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR SUGGESTED CONTENT TO BE INCLUDED IN EACH AREA

Specialized Preparation

Special Methods of Media Instruction and Design - Utilization of various media formats in the school situation. Introduction to the various technologies. Curriculum development and the role of media in the instructional process.

Audio Recording - Techniques of production, utilization and storage of audio materials. Selection and evaluation of related equipment.

Photographic Reproduction - Production, utilization and storage of prints, slides and other projective media. Selection and evaluation of related equipment.

Graphics - Production, storage and utilization of graphic artwork in media productions and presentations. Selection and evaluation of related equipment.

Television in Education - Production, utilization and storage of television equipment and externally produced materials.

Administration and Management of School Media Programs - Function and organization of the school media center and program. Emphasis on philosophy, principles and purposes of media program management, research and evaluation of media programs.

Preventive and Routine Maintenance of Media Equipment - Emphasis on simple repair, problem identification and servicing media equipment.

Electives - Additional work in one of the areas described, with free choice strengthening special needs or interests of the media specialist.

NOTE: Upon completion of all requirements, a written request must be submitted to receive certification in this area.

NOTE: This worksheet is to be considered advisory only. Requirements are subject to change at the discretion of the State Board of Education.

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REQUIREMENTS FOR CERTIFICATION AS MEDIA SUPERVISOR

		ON FILE	LACKS
A.	Master's Degree	_____	_____
B.	Certification as elementary or secondary supervisor.	_____	_____
C.	Valid South Carolina teaching credential with endorsement as a Media Specialist or Media Communication Specialist.	_____	_____
D.	Three years of successful experience as a Media Specialist or Media Communication Specialist in a school media center.	_____	_____
E.	A total of six semester hours of graduate credit in Supervision of School Media Programs and in Research and Evaluation of School Media Programs.	_____	_____
	Total Shortage	_____	

SUGGESTED CONTENT TO BE INCLUDED IN EACH AREA

Supervision of School Media Programs - Planning and implementation of staff development program. Selection, evaluation, retention, promotion and dismissal of media personnel. Coordination of district media programs.

Research and Evaluation of School Media Programs - Principles of evaluation design and implementation. Evaluation of services, in terms of basic objectives. Personnel evaluation processes, methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation.

NOTE: This worksheet is to be considered advisory only. Requirements are subject to change at the discretion of the State Board of Education.

NOTE: Upon completion of all requirements, a written request must be submitted to receive certification in this area.

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